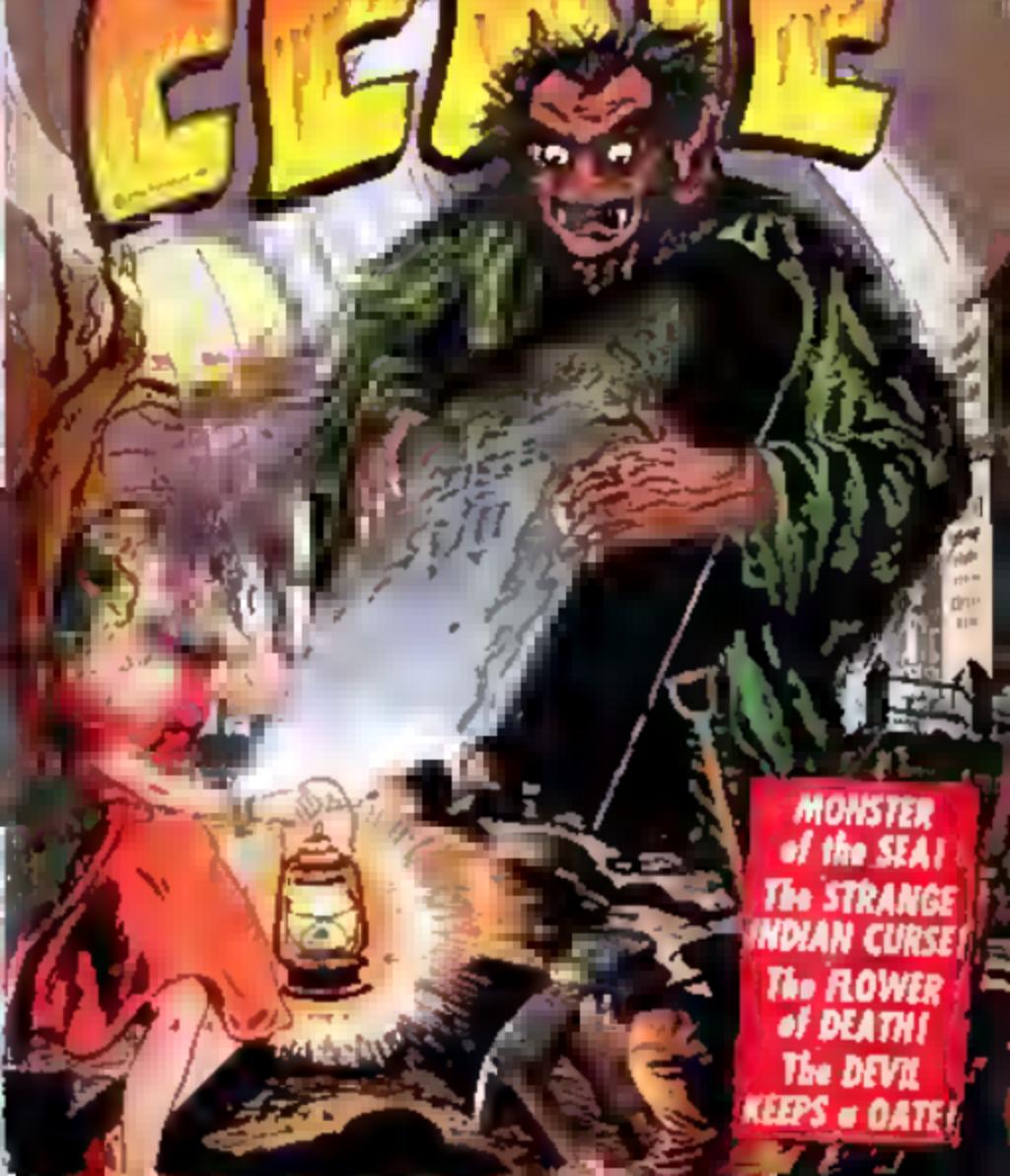


TALES OF FANTASY AND SUSPENSE

10c

No. 6

# EERIE



MONSTER  
of the SEA!

The STRANGE  
INDIAN CURSE

The FLOWER  
of DEATH!

The DEVIL  
KEEPS A DATE!

# WEB COMIC UNIVERSE.COM



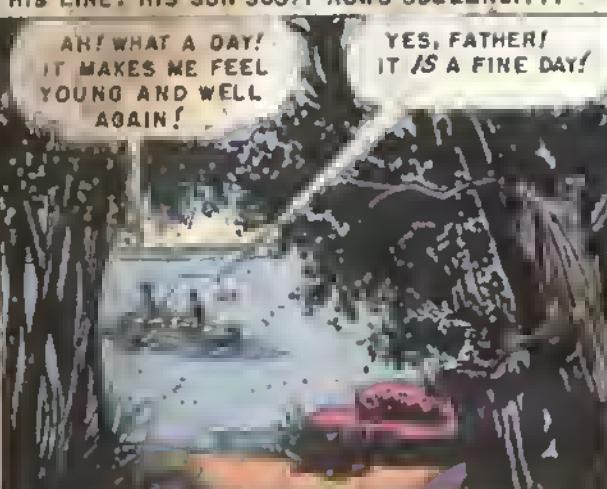
"NO MAN CAN LIVE WITH GUILT! . . . A TRANSGRESSOR IS NEVER FREE.  
HE IS HOUNDED DAY AND NIGHT BY THE PICTURE OF HIS BLOODY DEED.  
BUT SCOTT CALDWELL THOUGHT HE WOULD ESCAPE THE CURSE--THE  
TERRIBLE CURSE OF . . .

# The FLOWER of DEATH!



ND! ND!  
STAY AWAY!  
STAY AWAY!  
I DON'T WANT  
TO DIE!

ON THE HUGE LAKE OF THE CALDWELL ESTATE,  
PARALYTIC MILLIONAIRE PAUL CALDWELL CASTS  
HIS LINE. HIS SON SCOTT ROWS SULLENLY . . .



AH! WHAT A DAY!  
IT MAKES ME FEEL  
YOUNG AND WELL  
AGAIN!

YES, FATHER!  
IT IS A FINE DAY!

OH, ER, SCOTT . . . ABOUT  
ELLEN . . . YOU DON'T INTEND  
TO GO THROUGH WITH THAT  
MARRIAGE, DO YOU?

YES,  
FATHER! I  
INTEND TO  
MARRY ELLEN!  
THE SOONER  
THE BETTER!



SCOTT--YOU LEAVE ME  
NO CHOICE! IF YOU MARRY  
ELLEN AND LEAVE ME ALONE,  
I'LL DISINHERIT YOU!

YOU  
WOULN'T  
DARE!

OH, WOULN'T I?  
I CAN DO ANYTHING I  
WANT! SCOTT! SIT  
DOWN! YOU'RE ROCKING  
THE BOAT! SIT DOWN,  
I SAID!

I'M THROUGH TAKING  
ORDERS FROM YOU! I'M  
TIRED OF WATCHING OVER  
YOU LIKE A SICK PUPPY..  
I HATE YOU AND I  
REFUSE TO  
LET YOU RUIN  
MY LIFE!



NO, SCOTT! DON'T! I  
DIDN'T MEAN WHAT  
I SAID! PLEASE...

SORRY, FATHER - I'M  
GOING TO HAVE WHAT  
I WANT AT LAST!



SCOTT! SAVE ME,  
PLEASE! DON'T  
LET ME DROWN!  
PLEASE!!



I'LL GIVE YOU ANYTHING--  
HELP ME! HELP ME!



MINUTES LATER SCOTT DRAGS HIS DEAD FATHER ASHORE...

I'VE GOT TO MAKE THIS LOOK ACCIDENTAL...

HELP!  
HELP!

AT THE INQUEST PAUL CALLOWELL'S DEATH IS RULED ACCIDENTAL, THEN, AS MOURNERS ARRIVE...

THE LEAST WE COULD DO FOR HIM WAS TO FULFILL HIS LAST WISHES... TO BE BURIED IN HIS FULL DRESS SUIT WITH A WHITE CARNATION!

EASY, SCOTT! DON'T TAKE IT SO HARSH! YOUR FATHER SUFFERED! MAYBE THIS WAS FOR THE BEST!

DON'T TAKE HIM FROM ME! DAD! DAD!  
I HATE YOU!

PAUL  
CALLOWELL  
B. 1889  
D. 1955

SOME WEEKS LATER...

SCOTT, DARLING, ISN'T IT TOO SOON AFTER YOUR FATHER'S DEATH? WE CAN WAIT UNTIL HE'S MARRIED!

DAD WANTED IT THIS WAY, DEAREST! HE PASSED AWAY IN MY ARMS SAYING— "SCOTT MARRY ELLEN-- SHE'S A GOOD GIRL. DON'T DELAY!"

A MONTH LATER, A DAY BEFORE THE BIG EVENT, SCOTT'S TAILORS ARRIVE...

AH, MR. CALLOWELL! HERE'S YOUR SUIT-- AND RIGHT ON TIME!

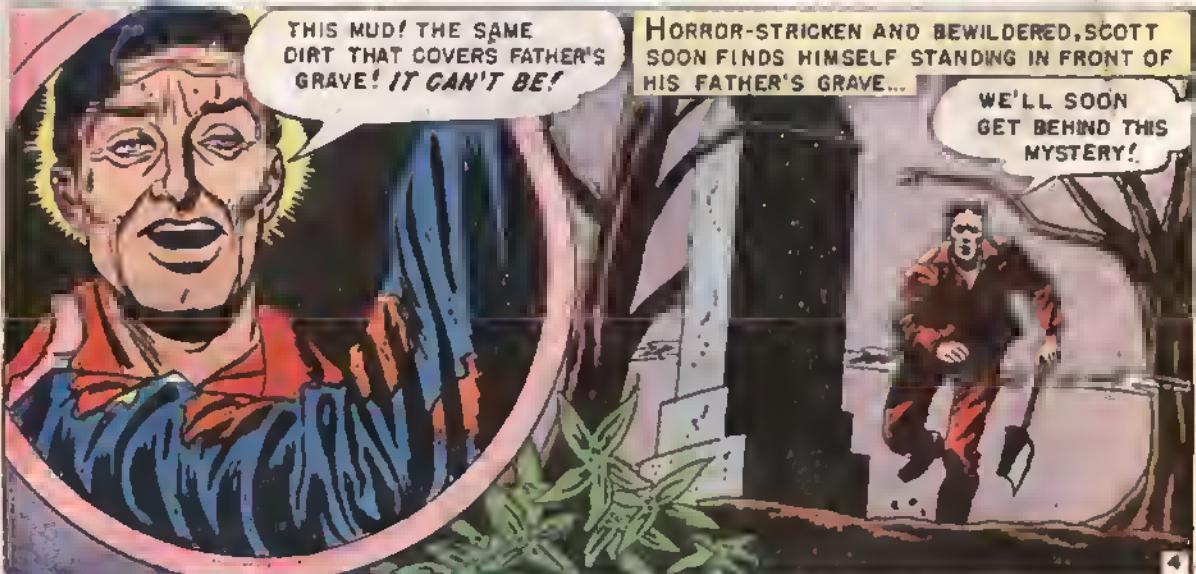
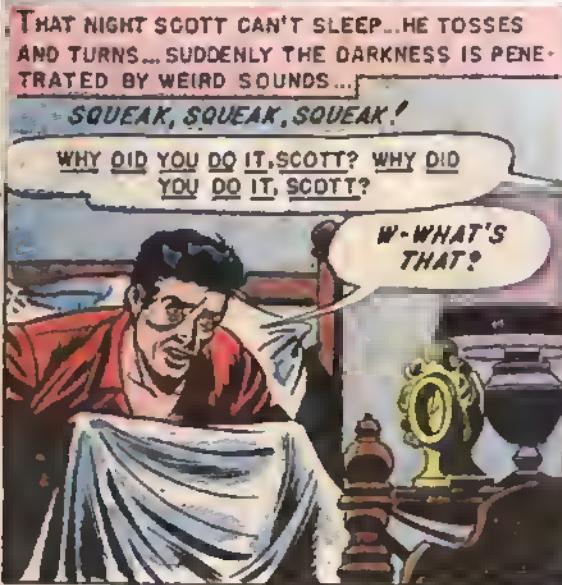
FINE!  
FINE!

WONDERFUL FIT,  
MR. CALDWELL!  
IT'S BEAUTIFUL!  
IT'S GORGEOUS.  
GORGEOUS.

IT FITS VERY WELL, GENTLEMEN, VERY---NO! NO! IT CAN'T BE!

WHAT'S WRONG,  
MR. CALDWELL?  
NO! NO!





LIKE A MAN POSSESSED, SCOTT DIGS FURIOUSLY!

A... LITTLE MORE...  
(UGH)... A LITTLE...  
MORE...

PAUL CALDWELL

FINALLY, SCOTT REACHES THE CASKET, AND  
OPENING IT, DISCOVERS...

THE CARRIAGE  
STILL LIVES! HO,  
IT CAN'T BE!

SCOTT CRABS THE SHOVEL  
AND BEGINS TO COVER THE  
GRAVE! THEN HE HEARS IT  
ONCE AGAIN...

SQUEAK! SQUEAK!

WHY DID YOU DO IT, SCOTT?  
WHY DID YOU DO IT, SCOTT?

HIS WHEEL CHAIR! HIS  
VOICE! IT'S DRIVING  
ME CRAZY!

HIS WHEEL CHAIR HAS  
BEEN HERE... BUT THAT'S  
IMPOSSIBLY. HE'S DEAD!



HELP ME! HELP ME! THIS  
ISN'T REAL...



REACHING THE SAFETY OF HIS ROOM,  
SCOTT SLUMPS INTO AN EASY CHAIR...



THE NEXT MORNING, SCOTT'S BUTLER  
ENTERS THE ROOM...

NO! NO! DON'T... I... MR. THE GUESTS ARE  
ER... OH, IT-IT'S ARRIVING! IT'S TIME  
YOU DRESSED FOR  
YOU WEDDING!



SCOTT RISES SLOWLY...AFRAID TO LOOK AT THE DRESS SUIT! BUT WHEN JAMES TAKES IT OUT OF THE CLOSET...

WHY, IT'S FRESHLY PRESSED! DID YOU PRESS IT? DID YOU PRESS IT. JAMES?

NO, SIR! THAT'S JUST THE WAY YOUR TAILORS BROUGHT IT!

AH HOUR LATER...

IT MUST HAVE BEEN A BAD NIGHTMARE! I MUST HAVE IMAGINED ALL OF IT!

...IS THERE ANY REASON WHY THESE TWO SHOULDN'T BE JOINED IN HOLY MATRIMONY? SPEAK NOW, OR FOREVER HOLD YOUR PEACE!



YES, SCOTT MURDERED ME!  
SCOTT MURDERED ME! SCOTT  
MURDERED ME...

IT ISN'T TRUE!  
HE DIDN'T WANT  
ME TO MARRY!  
DON'T LISTEN  
TO HIM...

SCOTT! WHAT'S  
WRONG? THERE'S  
NO ONE HERE!  
NO ONE SAID  
ANYTHING!

THE CARNATION!  
THE CARNATION!  
NO! I HAD TO  
KILL HIM! I  
HAD TO KILL  
MY FATHER!

SCOTT!  
WHAT ARE  
YOU SAY-  
ING? WHAT  
CARNATION?

SQUEAK! SQUEAK!

I'VE GOT TO ESCAPE...  
I'VE GOT TO... HIS  
WHEEL CHAIR...IT'S  
FOLLOWING ME!



RUNNING WILDLY TOWARD THE LAKE, SCOTT TURNS HIS HEAD IN THE DIRECTION OF THE EERIE SQUEAK. SUDDENLY, HIS FOOT CATCHES, AND...

IT'LL GET ME...OHHHHHH!



SCOTT FALLS INTO THE CHILLED WATERS OF THE LAKE...AND HIS BODY SLOWLY SINKS AND SINKS AND SINKS...



...AND SOON, A WHITE OBJECT RISES TO THE SURFACE AND FLOATS OUT, AND THEN DISAPPEARS... A WHITE CARNATION!



-END-

# Be the MASTER not the slave! Defend YOURSELF — IN ANY SITUATION — ANYWHERE



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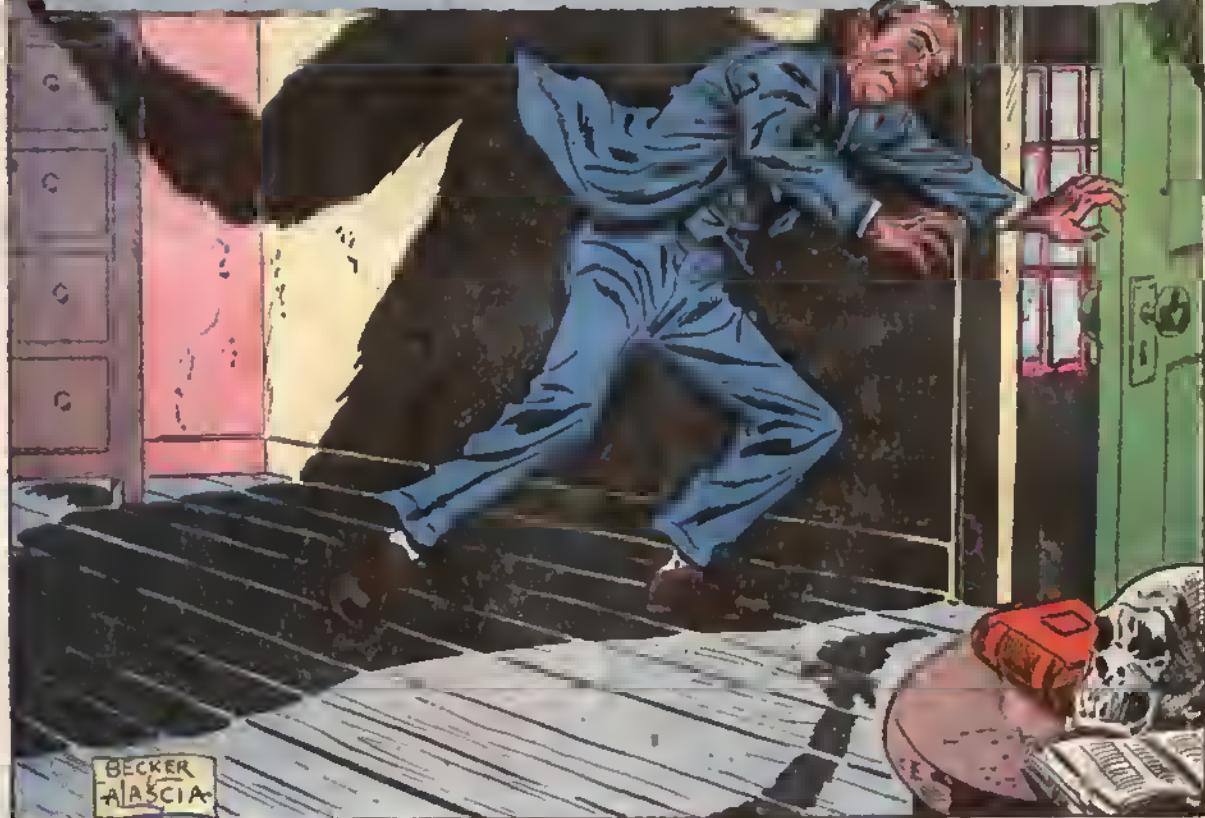
WRESTLING



BOXING

YOU CAN'T DO BUSINESS WITH SATAN! FICTION AND LEGEND TELL US THAT MANY MEN HAVE TRIED, BUT THEY HAVE ALL ENDED UP IN THE SAME PLACE! AND WHAT HAPPENS WHEN HOMER CARMICHAEL UNSUSPECTINGLY STRIKES UP A BARGAIN WITH THE MAN IN THE RED SUIT?

# the DEVIL KEEPS a DATE!



HOMER CARMICHAEL, A WEAK LITTLE MAN, HAS ONLY ONE ENJOYMENT OUT OF LIFE...HIS PUNCTUALITY IN ALL HIS YEARS AT HASKIN'S HARDWARE, INC., HE HAS NEVER BEEN LATE OR ABSENT. NOW, AT BREAKFAST...



BREAKFAST IS FINISHED, AND AT PRECISELY 8:01 HOMER IS AT THE DOOR, READY TO LEAVE...

GOOD-BYE, DEAR! I'LL BE HOME THE USUAL TIME...5:46!

TAKE CARE,  
HOMER!



LATER, AS HOMER ENTERS THE ELEVATOR...

MORNING, MR. CAR-  
MICHAEL! RIGHT  
ON TIME AGAIN,  
EH?

I'M ALWAYS ON  
TIME, JACK!



THAT AFTERNOON AT LUNCH...

HOMER,  
HOW CAN  
YOU STAND  
SUCH A  
RIGID SCHED-  
ULE!

SOME MEN LIKE TO  
DRINK, OTHERS TO GAMBLE! IT  
EXCITES THEM! WELL, THIS EXCITES  
ME JUST AS MUCH! IT'S A CHALLENGE  
AND IT'S GONE ON FOR SO LONG, IT  
WOULD KILL ME TO BREAK IT! ON  
OH! TIME WE STARTED BACK!



THE TIME IS 4:55, AND EVERY DAY AT THIS TIME  
HOMER STARTS CLEANING UP, READY TO GO HOME...

MY, HOW  
TIME  
FLIES!



OH, HOMER, WILL  
YOU STEP INTO MY  
OFFICE FOR A  
MOMENT?

BUT, MR. HASKINS,  
IT'S ALREADY... YES.  
SIR, IF IT'S ONLY  
FOR A MOMENT...



DON'T WORRY,  
HOMER! THIS  
WON'T TAKE LONG!

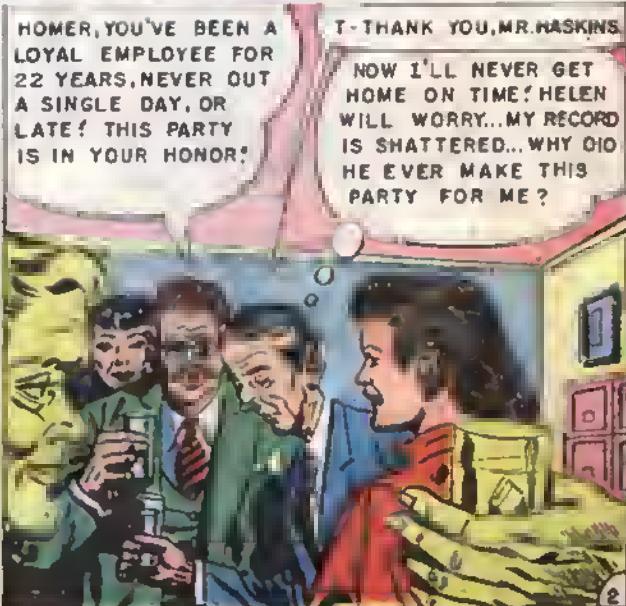
SURPRISE!



HOMER, YOU'VE BEEN A  
LOYAL EMPLOYEE FOR  
22 YEARS, NEVER OUT  
A SINGLE DAY, OR  
LATE! THIS PARTY  
IS IN YOUR HONOR!

T-THANK YOU, MR. HASKINS

NOW I'LL NEVER GET  
HOME ON TIME! HELEN  
WILL WORRY... MY RECORD  
IS SHATTERED... WHY DID  
HE EVER MAKE THIS  
PARTY FOR ME?





I SURE APPRECIATE THIS! MY NAME'S BARNEY BEE! ANY TIME I CAN HELP YA, DON'T HESITATE!

MY NAME'S HOMER CAR-MICHAEL, AND I DOUBT WHETHER ANYONE CAN HELP ME!



THERE AIN'T A THING IN THIS WORLD THAT CAN'T BE DONE! WHAT'S TROUBLIN' YA?

WELL, YOU SEE, IT'S LIKE THIS...

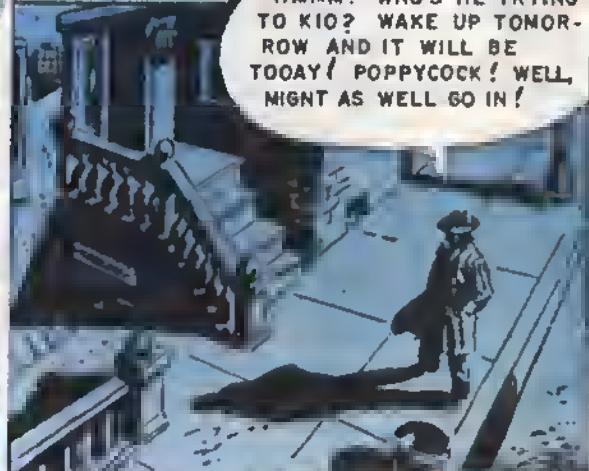


HOMER TELLS HIS NEW-FOUND FRIEND HIS TRAGIC TALE... CAN YOU IMAGINE? AFTER ALL THOSE YEARS, ONE LITTLE SURPRISE PARTY...

LOOK, HOMER! I CAN HELP YOU! JUST GO HOME...AND WHEN YOU WAKE UP TOMORROW MORNING, IT'LL BE TODAY! YOUR RECORD WILL BE INTACT!



ONE BEER IS ENOUGH TO MAKE HOMER CAR-MICHAEL DROWSY, AND SOON HE IS IN FRONT OF HIS HOUSE...



WELL, HOW DO YOU LIKE THAT? I'VE BEEN GONE ALL EVENING AND HELEN DOESN'T EVEN NOTICE IT! SHE HAS THE GALL TO THROW A PARTY! I'LL SPEAK TO HER IN THE MORNING!

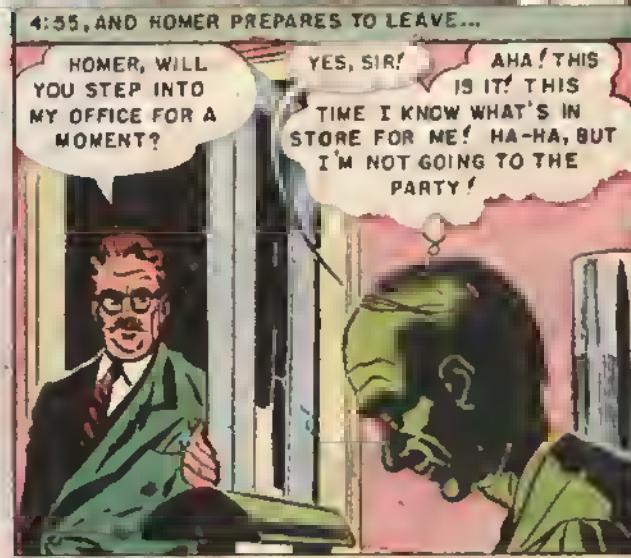
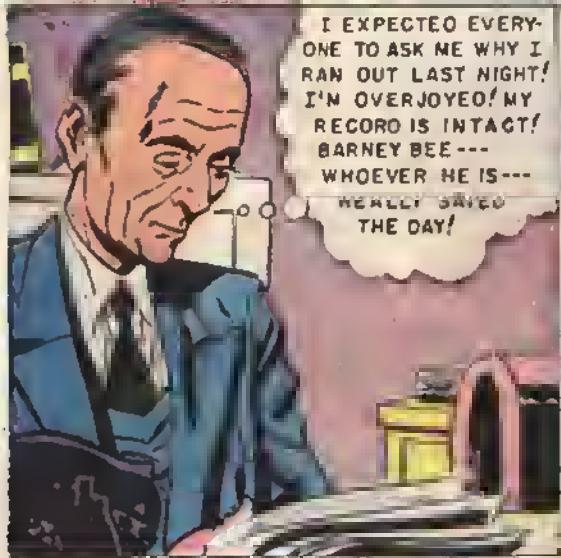
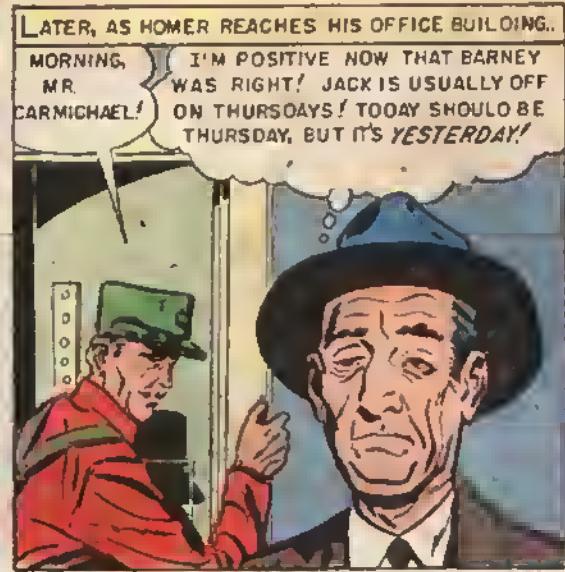


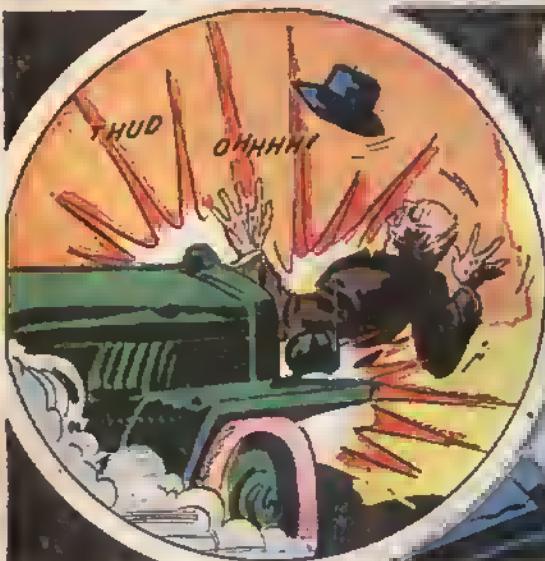
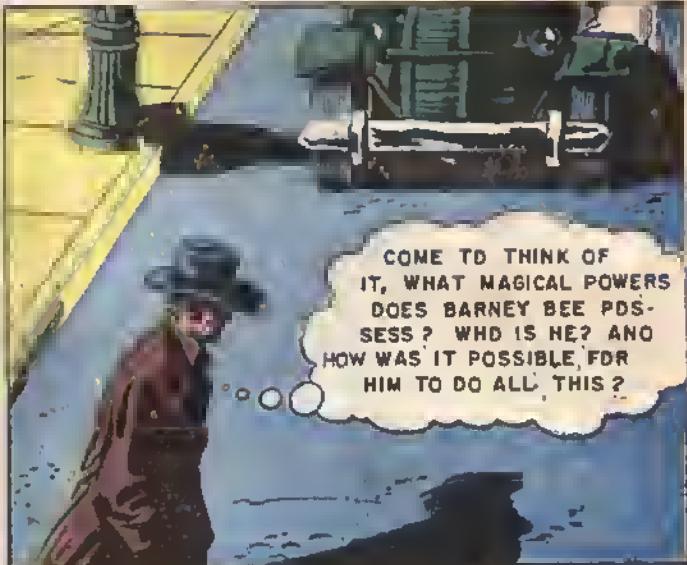
THROUGH FORCE OF HABIT, HOMER RISES AT THE USUAL TIME...

OH, HELEN, ABOUT LAST NIGHT...

WE HAD FUN, DIDN'T WE, HOMER? THE ANDERSONS ARE SUCH FINE PEOPLE!







# An Amazing NEW HEALTH SUPPORTER BELT

For men in their 30's, 40's, 50's  
who want to

**LOOK SLIMMER  
and  
FEEL YOUNGER**



POSTURE BAD?  
Get a 'Bay Window'?



DO YOU ENVY MEN  
who can  
'KEEP ON THEIR FEET'?

and then he got a  
"CHEVALIER" . . .



YOU NEED A  
"CHEVALIER"!

**DOTS** a bulging "bay window" make you look and feel years older than you really are? Then here, at last, is the answer to your problem! "Chevalier", the wonderful new adjustable health supporter belt is scientifically constructed to help you look and feel years younger!

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Works quick as a  
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the strap and presto!  
The belt is perfectly  
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Air-sealed! Scientifically designed and  
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Firmly holds in your  
bulky abdomen; yet  
is stretchable as  
you breathe,  
bend, stoop, sit  
down, etc.



Rear View  
FITS SNUG AT  
SMALL OF BACK  
Firm, comfortable  
support. Feels good!

**FREE** Extra Pouch. The  
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usable pouch made of a soft,  
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Order yours today!

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1. You risk nothing! Just mail coupon—be sure to give  
name and address, also waist measure, etc.—odd  
mail today!



2. Try on the  
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you want. See how your bulging  
"bay window" feels eliminated  
...how comfortable you feel. How  
good it is!



3. Wear the "Chevalier"  
for 10 whole days if you  
want to. Wear it to work,  
evening, while traveling,  
etc. The "Chevalier" must  
help you look and feel  
"like a million" or you can  
send it back! See offer in  
coupon!



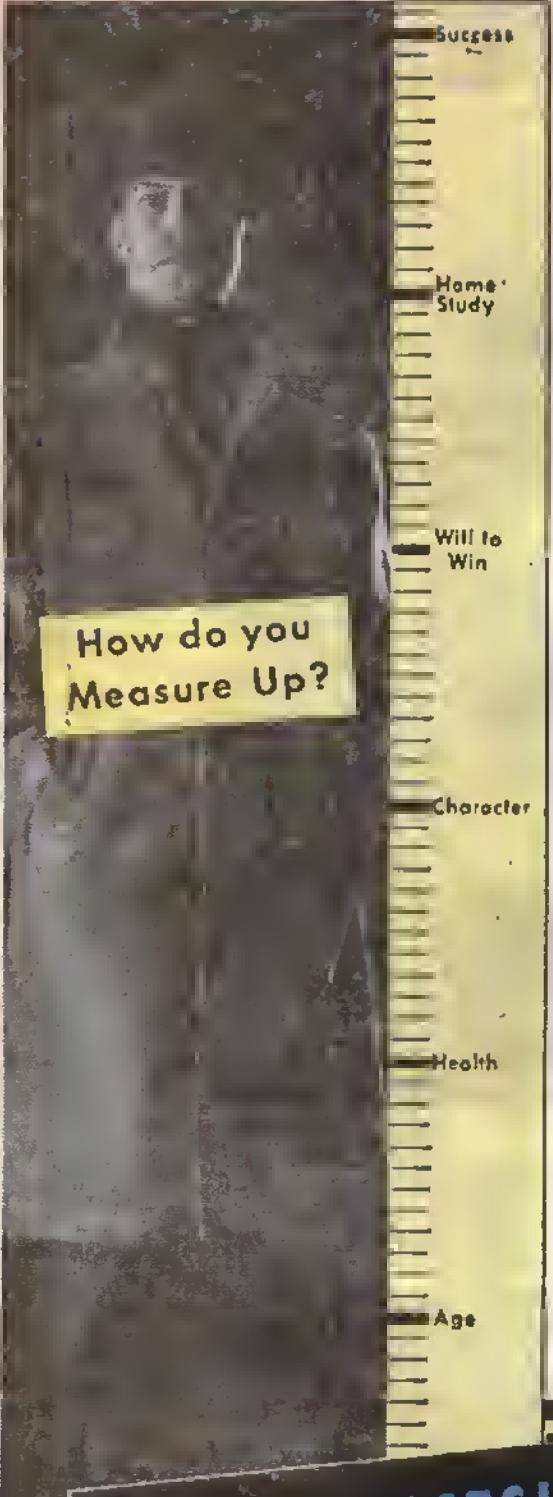
### SEND NO MONEY: JUST MAIL COUPON

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Send me for 10 days' FREE TRIAL a CHEVALIER HEALTH-SUPPORTER BELT. I will pay postage \$3.95 (plus postage) with the understanding that includes my FREE pouch. If 10 days, I will either return the CHEVALIER to you and you will return my money, or otherwise my payment will be a full and final purchase price.

My waist measure is ..... (Send along the size of your waist if no tape measure is handy)  
Name ..... Address ..... City and Zone ..... State .....  
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Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ RFD or Zone \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

JONATHAN POTTS WAS A GENEALOGIST! WHEN HE WAS COMMISSIONED TO LOOK UP THE FORTESCU FAMILY TREE, HE WAS PLEASED AT THE FAT FEE IT WOULD BRING! HE COULD NOT KNOW WHAT GRISLY TERROR WAS COMING AS HE UNEARTHED THE GRUESOME...

# MONSTER of the SEA!



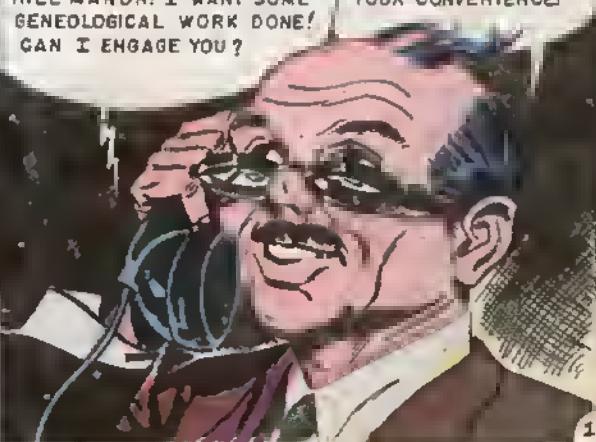
JONATHAN POTTS LOVED HIS WORK! BUT HE WISHED THAT BIG FEES WOULDN'T BE SO FEW AND FAR BETWEEN!

I CERTAINLY HOPE THIS IS SOMEBODY IMPORTANT WHO WANTS HIS FAMILY HISTORY TRACED!



JONATHAN POTTS! THIS IS WALTER LIVINGSTON, CASTLE HILL MANOR! I WANT SOME GENEALOGICAL WORK DONE! CAN I ENGAGE YOU?

WHY, OF COURSE! I'LL CALL UPON YOU AT YOUR CONVENIENCE!



POTTS WAS DELIGHTED! HE KNEW THAT WALTER LIVINGSTON WAS A RICH MAN! THE LIVINGSTON ESTATE WAS ON THE MAINE SEACOAST, ONLY A FEW MILES AWAY...

WHAT A HANDSOME PLACE! THIS IS THE KIND OF JOB I'M AFTER!



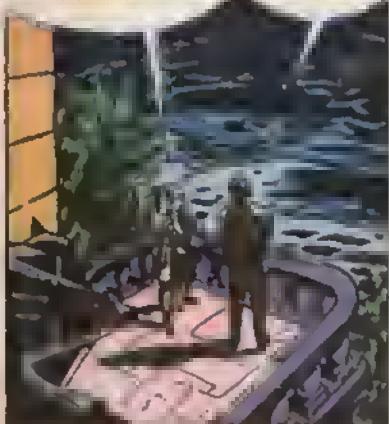
YES, I'M VERY INTERESTED IN GENEALOGY! MR. LIVINGSTON WILL TELL YOU WHAT WE WANT-- IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME...

WHY, OF COURSE, MRS. LIVINGSTON!



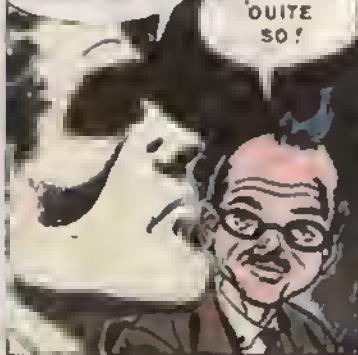
BEAUTIFUL PLACE YOU HAVE HERE, MR. LIVINGSTON.

YES--WE LOVE THE SEA...



THE SEA IS SO FASCINATING! REMINDS ME ALWAYS OF THAT POEM, "OCEAN, THOU MIGHTY MONSTER!"

ER-- YES,  
'QUITE  
SO!'



WHAT WE WANT IS A FULL HISTORY OF THE 'FORTESCU FAMILY!' THE BALKAN FORTESCU'S, I THINK-- I HOPE IT WAS AN ILLUSTRIOUS, IMPORTANT FAMILY!

BALKAN  
FORTESCU'S!  
ROMANIA,  
PERHAPS  
I'LL DO MY  
BEST!



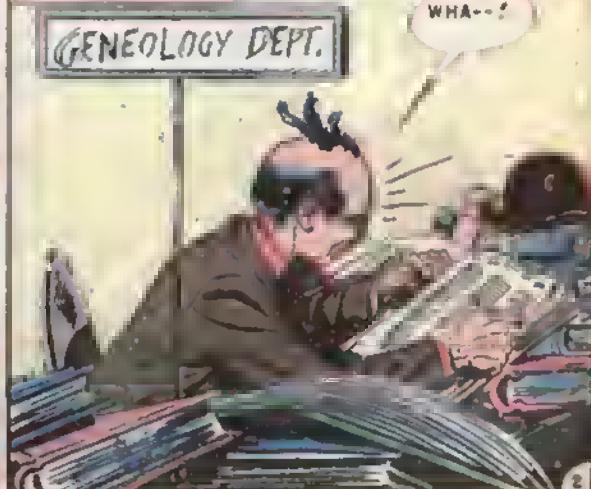
CERTAINLY A BEAUTY, THAT MRS. LIVINGSTON! ROMANIAN BLOOD, MAYBE, WITH A STRAIN OF GYPSY!



JOATHAN POTTS CERTAINLY HAD NO PREMONITION OF THE WEIRD THINGS HE WOULD FIND, WHEN THAT NEXT DAY...

GENEALOGY DEPT.

WHA--?



THE BALKAN FORTESCU HAD A TURGID, A TERRIBLE HISTORY! POTTS FOUND WHERE IT BEGAN, WHEN THE SWAGGERING BARON VASLOV FORTESCU RULED HIS LITTLE FEUDAL KINGDOM, IN EUROPE ON THE COAST OF THE BLACK SEA!

OUT OF MY WAY,  
MINIONS!

"THE BARON VASLOV  
FORTESCU WAS  
HATED AND FEARED  
BY HIS RETAINERS,  
AND HIS TENANTS!"

"THE GYPSIES WERE VERY PLEASED WITH THE PLACE! THEY HAD NO IDEA IT WOULD LEAD THEM INTO TROUBLE!"

YES! YES, SURELY!

WE HAVE PICKED WELL,  
FRANTZ! WE SHALL BE  
HAPPY HERE!

"THERE CAME A DAY WHEN A BAND OF WANDERING GYPSIES PITCHED THEIR ENCAMPMENT ON A DISTANT PORTION OF THE BARON'S LANDS!"



"LIKE GAY CHILDREN!"

TIA IS SO  
BEAUTIFUL!  
TIA...WE WANT  
A TARANTELLA  
NEXT!

YES! YES, MAKE TIA  
DANCE THE TARANTELLA!

"BUT, SOON, WHEN THE BARON VASLOV FORTESCU HEARD OF IT..."

YES, MASTER...  
THEY ARE THERE,  
AT THE NORTH  
BY THE SEA!

HO! WHAT IS THIS?  
GYPSIES TRESPASSING ON  
MY LAND? I SHALL  
ATTEND TO THAT!

GET OFF MY  
LAND, ALL OF  
YOU! BE  
GONE!

WE DID NOT KNOW WE  
ARE VERY HAPPY HERE...IF  
THERE IS SOMETHING... A  
LITTLE, PERHAPS... THAT  
WE COULD PAY YOU...?



I TELL YOU, I  
WANT NO FOUL GYPSIES  
ON MY LAND! GET  
OUT OF HERE!

THE BARON'S BLOW OUTRAGED THE GYPSIES! THEIR  
OLD CHIEFTAIN TRIED TO STOP THEM, BUT...



"ONE OF THE BARON'S RETAINERS WAS KNOCKED  
OFF HIS HORSE..."

HE'S DEAD!  
THEY KILLED  
HIM!

HIS FALL  
KILLED HIM!  
I DID NOT  
MEAN TO KILL  
HIM!

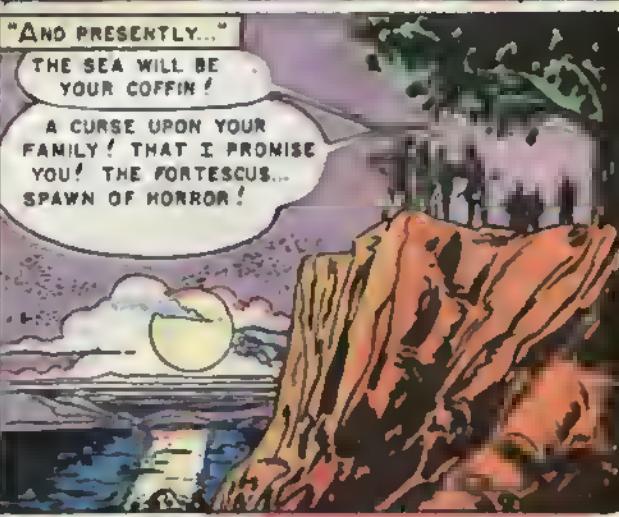
SEIZE THAT  
OLD CHIEF!  
HE SHALL PAY  
FOR THIS!



"AND PRESENTLY..."

THE SEA WILL BE  
YOUR COFFIN!

A CURSE UPON YOUR  
FAMILY! THAT I PROMISE  
YOU! THE FORTESCUS...  
SPAWN OF HORROR!



DOOMED FORTESCUS! ALWAYS I  
SHALL CALL YOUR FIRST-BORN  
SON, AND EACH SHALL COME  
TO ME! NONE WILL LIVE PAST  
THIRTY...SAVE WITH ME IN MY  
COFFIN OF THE SEA! AND THEY  
WILL BRING WITH THEM WHAT  
MAY THEY LOVE! MY  
VENGEANCE...

"IT WAS VERY FUNNY TO THE  
BARON, AS HE WATCHED HIS  
MEN PUSH THE OLD GIPSY INTO  
THE SEA!"

A CURSE UPON  
YOUR FAMILY!

HA, HA! DON'T  
GET WET!



"BARON VASLOV DIED TEN YEARS  
LATER, AND HIS SON RULED THE  
LITTLE KINGDOM! HE WAS MORE  
KINDLY THAN HIS FATHER...IT IS  
SAID HE LOVED HIS YOUNG WIFE  
AND THEIR INFANT SON VERY  
DEARLY..." HE

WILL GROW TO  
BE LIKE YOU!

THAT IS NICE  
OF YOU TO  
SAY, TANIA!



"THEN, SUDDENLY..."

TANIA! S...SOMETHING THE  
MATTER WITH ME! TANIA,  
YOU HEAR THE SEA...IT'S  
CALLING, TANIA!

WHA...?!



"THEN THE YOUNG BARONESS STOOD GASPING, FROZEN  
WITH HORROR..." HA!

HA! THE SEA CALLS  
NOW! AND I MUST BRING  
WITH ME THE ONE I  
LOVE! WHY...WHY THAT'S  
YOU, TANIA! HA! HA!



AAAIEEEEE!



COME, FORTESCU!  
COME!

YES, MASTER!



WELCOME, FORTESCU!  
THE FIRST OF  
MANY!



"DOONED FORTESCUS, DOWN THROUGH THE GENERATIONS...

HA! HA! THEY  
COME TO ME, EACH  
IN HIS TURN!



JONATHAN POTTS, AS HE READ\* OF IT ALL IN THE MUSTY OLD BOOKS, WAS SHUDDERING...



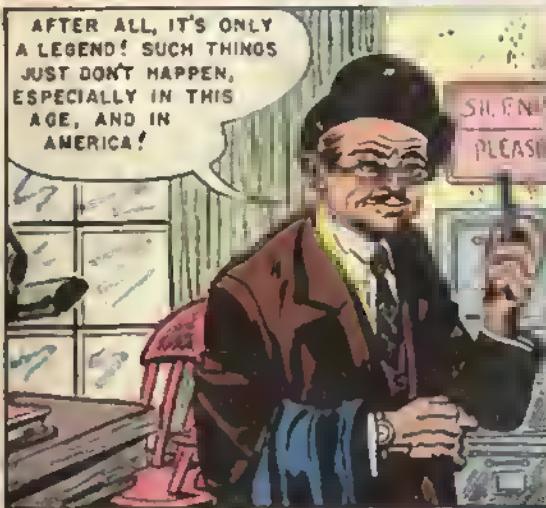
AND THEN HE READ, "AFTER THE BARON EMIL, IT IS THOUGHT THAT THE FAMILY WENT TO AMERICA..." THAT BOOK GAVE NO MORE! HE MIGHT HAVE FOUND OTHERS. BUT...



THE CONSCIENTIOUS JONATHAN POTTS WASN'T SURE JUST WHAT HE SHOULD DO... SHOULD I TELL THE LIVINGSTONS ABOUT THIS, OR JUST REPORT I COULDN'T FIND ANYTHING? BUT IF I DO THAT, I'LL LOSE MOST OF MY FEE.



AFTER ALL, IT'S ONLY A LEGEND! SUCH THINGS JUST DON'T HAPPEN, ESPECIALLY IN THIS AGE, AND IN AMERICA!

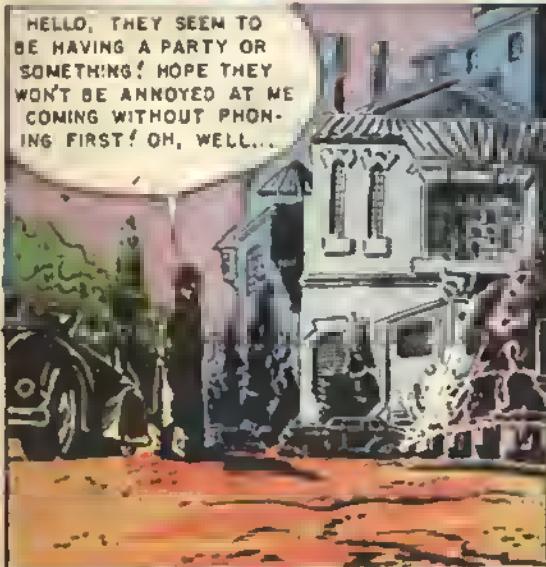


HE WAS STILL BOthered by it, when he drove out to Castle Hill Manor that evening...

ANYWAY, THAT MRS. LIVINGSTON IS A WOMAN! THE LEGEND SAID IT WAS ONLY MEN...THE ELDEST SOH...YES, I'LL TELL HER!



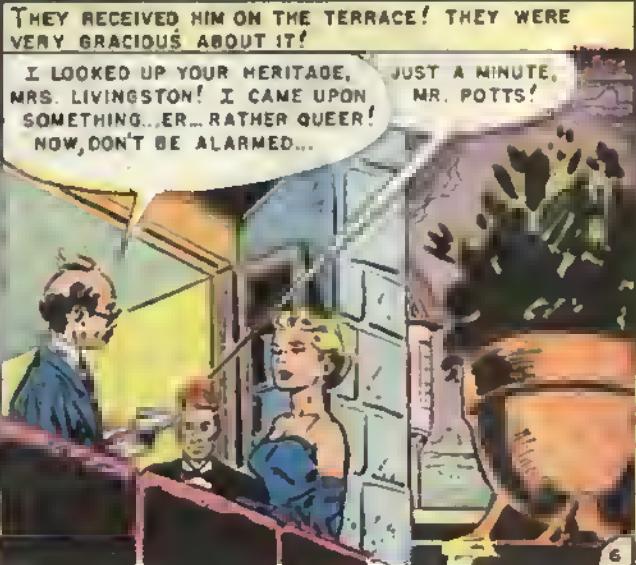
HELLO, THEY SEEM TO BE HAVING A PARTY OR SOMETHING! HOPE THEY WON'T BE ANNOYED AT ME COMING WITHOUT PHONING FIRST! OH, WELL...

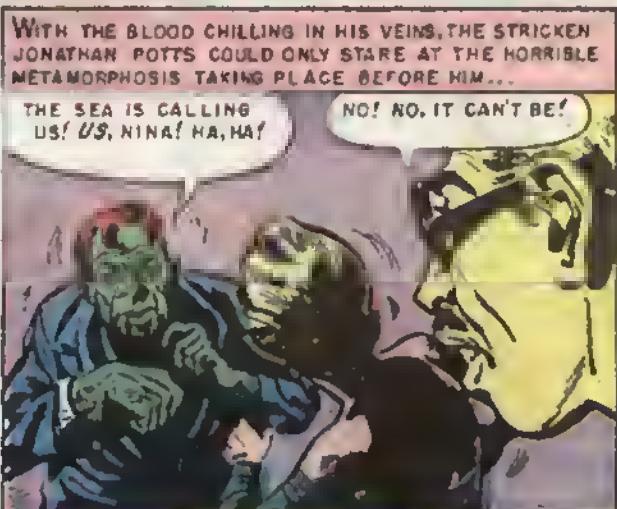


THEY RECEIVED HIM ON THE TERRACE! THEY WERE VERY GRACIOUS ABOUT IT!

I LOOKED UP YOUR HERITAGE, MRS. LIVINGSTON! I CAME UPON SOMETHING...ER...RATHER QUEER! NOW, DON'T BE ALARMED...

JUST A MINUTE, MR. POTTS!







# THE STORY BEHIND THE COVER-- GREAT GOG'S GRAVE!

The trouble with me is that I am too skeptical; I don't always believe what I hear. So, naturally, when my girl friend Dora asked me to help her look for Gog's grave I didn't stop to argue with her. I just said yes, figuring it would turn out to be a lark in the graveyard that would result in nothing more serious than some bruised shins and maybe a few stolen kisses. Anybody else in Center City would have argued with her a bit. Me, I never believe in ghost stories, and certainly not one as old as this.

The whole city had had a recent recurrence of stories about Gog. There had been some mighty mysterious footprints seen in mud on rainy mornings at the city edge where the old graveyard is. They were pretty big, I will admit, much too big for any bear or even circus giant to account for. A couple of photos taken by a newspaper man showed a foot that was maybe twenty inches long and with awfully long claw marks. Personally, I thought it was a gag—the silly season for newspaper stories starts about this time of year flying saucers and so on.

So after those footprints were found, the newspaper writers dug up all the old legends of Gog and rewrote them for the Sunday numbers. It seems that before the first white colonists came to this section, the Indians had a legend. They

claimed there was a huge man-monster named Gog who lived nearby. This monster was like a man, only about three times as big, hairy, fanged like a wild animal, and pretty nearly immortal. The Indian legend had it that Gog had always been here—that he'd haunted the locality even before they themselves had arrived. But when it came right down to it, nobody ever admitted seeing Gog.

They located the first colonial graveyard just about where Gog's grave or cave or spot was supposed to be. That shows what little regard the founding fathers took for the Indians' folktales. For a while everything was all right. Then there came a series of midnight troubles. Something kidnapped a number of colonists—and their bodies were never found. Something broke into some houses—from the roof! Something left whopping big footprints along the roads. The colonists suspected the Indians, but they couldn't prove it. Anyway the trouble stopped after a while. About fifty years later another outbreak occurred—people missing, etc. From the records and newspaper stories, the reporters had figured out that Gog evidently slept for about fifty years, then came out from wherever he was hiding, had himself a few citizens for supper, and went back to bed. This, they said, must have been going on for

centuries—and it was now just about fifty years since the last troubles. Gog was evidently waking up now, they concluded.

The stories gave me a laugh. I don't believe in such nonsense. Old wives' stories and fairy tales, that's all I figured them. But my girl, Dora, is imaginative. She was going to find out for herself: she had some idea of selling a good account of it to the papers. And when she asked me to join her at the old graveyard and dig for Gog's grave that night, I said sure.

So around midnight we drove my old car out to the city's edge, parked it by the old gates, and lugging a shovel and pick that Dora had borrowed somewhere, we hoofed it into the cemetery. The place was abandoned. There wasn't any watchman because nobody had been buried there in over seventy years—the colonists had used it and now it was a sort of public park, only the city had never quite gotten around to fixing it up. It was all overrun and the old flat tombstones from a hundred and two hundred years ago were mostly fallen over or unreadable from age.

Dora figured that Gog's grave was somewhere near the center. She was going to turn over the old tombstones and try to see if any of them mentioned it. Maybe the original settlers had marked the

spot the Indians thought was Gog'a.

Anyway, it was a night's work, for sure, but I figured that I could snatch a bit of necking now and then and maybe Dora would be so grateful for my help she'd say yea the next time I asked her to marry me. So we set out, Dora holding an oil lantern and I carrying the pick and shovel.

We turned over a number of tombstones but didn't find anything helpful. We read a lot of funny old inscriptions, and found some graves that were maybe as old as the city. We came, finally, to one old, big slab set in the ground—the kind of slab that usually marks some bigwig. We sat on it for a while, wondering where Gog would have been. Then Dora kicked the slab idly with her foot. The thing rocked!

"Hey," she said, "what's this?" We got up and looked. Sure enough, the big slab was loose, and looked as if it had just fallen over. I pushed the pick under one end and strained. It moved slowly aside. I pushed it farther. A hole was revealed: The slab covered a hole in the ground—an opening like a deep grave.

In the light of the full moon Dora and I looked at each other. She set her lantern down, got the shovel and we moved the slab all the way aside. Now we looked down. This was no mere grave. This was an entrance, for there were old, worn stone stairs going down into darkness under the ground! We looked again, wondering what to do. If it weren't that I didn't want my girl to think I was a coward, I'd have beat it out of there, but fast! I was scared. But Dora wasn't. She was only excited. She said,

"Let's go down and see where they lead to." Like a dope, I nodded.

I carried the pick and she carried the lantern and we started down those stairs. They were awfully old and worn. Down we went into the hole underneath that slab in the center of the city's oldest graveyard. We were soon below the level of the ground and still those stairs went down before us. It was dampish and I could smell the mouldy dirt of the walls around us. We were descending a sort of sloping absit and getting deep. We went down about thirty steps and around a little curve and then we came out into a sort of little cave-like room. We looked around. It was a stone enclosed place underground, maybe about fifty feet long. There was no other exit, just the old stairs behind us leading upwards.

I breathed easier when I saw there was nothing moving down there. Nothing alive, I guess, going down those stairs. I didn't quite know what to expect. Maybe Gog. But all there was in that old cave were skeletons, lots of them.

We walked around among them. They were all bare and white and old, and maybe a couple of hundred of them. They must have been lying there for dozens of years. "I guess maybe this was a mass grave back in the colonial days," I said at last. "Maybe there was an epidemic or an Indian massacre and they buried all the bodies together."

"Yes," Dora said uneasily. It seemed like a logical explanation. I didn't try to figure out why one section of the room had no skeletons, only a cleared spot about fifteen feet

long with a sort of indentation in the ground as if some animal were used to sleeping there. I didn't mention it to her. She bent over, fumbling amid the dirt and scraps on the floor and then picked up something. It was a coin, just a copper cent. The light from the lantern turned on the date and we looked at it. The date was 1902. And we knew there had been no epidemic in 1902; it was the last time there had been so many mysterious disappearances!

We didn't say anything more. We just turned around and started back up those stairs. Halfway up, I started trying to talk myself out of it. "Nuts," I said, "We're acting like a couple of fools to run out without examining the cave further. I bet the cops know all about those bodies. I bet we'll just look like a couple of saps when we tell them about this. There just can't be anything like this Gog thing."

"No," said Dora, hurrying up the stairs with me, as we were nearing the top, "there must be some perfectly simple explanation. I don't really believe in that foolish old fable." We reached the surface level, and panted up the last two or three steps. "There is no such thing as Gog," Dora said.

"Dh, yes there is," said his voice. As we turned in horror, we saw the clawed hands of the monster reaching for us as he stood by the entrance to his hidden grave, the slab propped up and his great eyes gleaming hungrily and his tusked jaws opening for their first meal in fifty years!

Tomorrow the paper will report the first of a new series of mysterious disappearances. Dora and me.

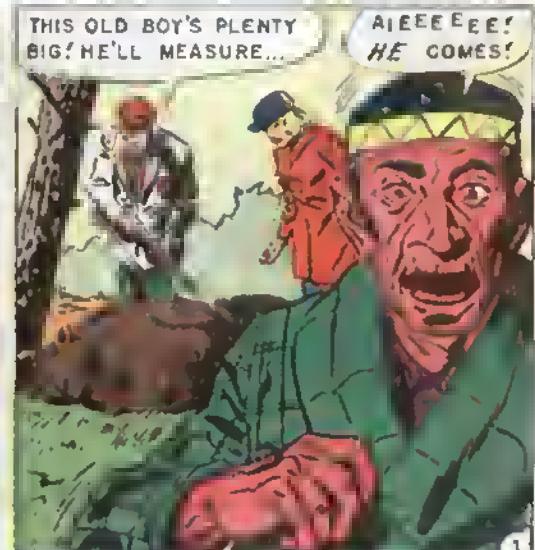


# THE STRANGE INDIAN CURSE



OUT OF THE DEEP FOREST, OUT OF THE LEGENDARY PAST, CAME A TORTURED HUMAN SOUL, DOOMED TO WALK THE EARTH IN THE BODY OF A BEAST---

HUNTING BIG GAME IN THE NORTH WOODS, BOB KENDALL AND HIS WIFE, ANNE, CAME FACE TO FACE WITH A HUGE ALASKAN BEAR...



OH, BOB, LOOK!  
HE'S IMMENSE!

WOW! LET ME  
GET A SHOT  
AT HIM!

NO! DON'T SHOOT!  
WE WILL BE  
CURSED!

IT IS THE BEAR  
THAT WALKS LIKE  
A MAN!

STOP IT! I'LL NEVER  
GET ANOTHER CHANCE  
LIKE THIS!

OH, BOB!  
HE'S  
GONE!

WE'VE LOST HIM!  
WHAT'S ALL THIS  
NONSENSE?

IT TRUE! HIM GHOST  
BEAR WITH SOUL OF A  
MAN INSIDE! HIM WALK  
IN WOODS FOREVER!

AN OLD WIFE'S STORY TOLD BY ALL INDIAN! LONG-TALE GHOSTS AGD, ALL OF FOREST OWNED BY BIG TRIBE. TRIBE'S TOTEM, SACRED THING, WAS GOLD NUGGET CALLED "EYE OF THE BEAR", WAS KEPT IN STOCKADE, GUARDED BY SACRED BEAR...

ONE NIGHT CAME YOUNG BRAVE  
CALLED BIG CRAZY WOLF... WANT  
TO STEAL "EYE OF THE BEAR"  
TO SHOW HIS COURAGE... HIM  
KILL SACRED BEAR...

HIM TAKE NUGGET TO SHOW  
TO YOUNG GIRL HE LOVE...

BUT GIRL KNOW IT IS BAD! SHE  
SCREAM, AND SOON WHOLE TRIBE  
COME!



BIG CRAZY WOLF RUN AWAY INTO FOREST, BUT  
ANGRY BRAVES HUNT HIM DOWN...



IN DEEP WOODS, THEY CATCH HIM, THEY PUT  
CURSE ON HIM!

AND YOUR BONES SHALL BE  
SCATTERED IN THE FOREST! YOUR SPIRIT SHALL  
WALK THE EARTH FOREVER IN THE BODY OF  
A GREAT BEAR...



BUT, THEY NEVER FIND SACRED NUGGET...

...UNTIL A MAN OF ANOTHER RACE  
SHALL GATHER YOUR SCATTERED BONES  
AND GIVE THEM A PROPER BURIAL! ONLY  
THEN SHALL YOU ENTER THE HAPPY  
HUNTING GROUNDS!



I CANNOT STAY  
WHERE HE WALKS.  
FAREWELL...

COME BACK  
HERE!

LET HIM GO, BOB. WE'VE  
GOT OUR BEAR! LET'S  
GET BACK TO CAMP  
BEFORE DARK!



AN HOUR LATER, BOB AND ANNE  
ARE BACK IN CAMP...

JUST IN TIME, TOO... IT'S  
STARTING TO RAIN!



AND, SOON ALL IS SNUG FOR  
THE NIGHT, UNTIL...

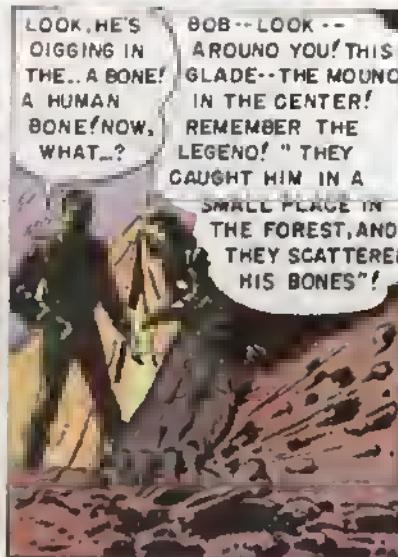
BOB, LISTEN...  
THERE'S SOME-  
THING OUTSIDE!

PROBABLY  
JUST THE  
RAIN...



LISTEN!  
DON'T YOU  
HEAR IT?  
BY GEORGE, THERE  
IS SOMETHING...!  
I'LL TAKE MY GUN,  
AND...





FOR AN HOUR, BOB AND ANNE DIG DESPERATELY, SEARCHING FOR THE ANCIENT BONES---

BOB! I--I CAN'T GO ON! YOU MUST, ANNE, YOU MUST!

THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT HE'LL DO IF WE STOP NOW!

OHHHHHHH! BOB, EASY, DARLING! I... I'M GOING TO FAINT... HOLD ON...

THE SKULL... AND THAT'S THE LAST OF IT! BUT THE LEGEND SAID, "GIVE THEM PROPER BURIAL." WE'LL HAVE TO... DIG A GRAVE!

THERE! NOW ALL THAT IS LEFT IS TO COVER IT UP, AND THEN IT'S OVER! OVER! BUT... BUT AFTER THAT, WILL HE...?

THAT DOES IT! AND NOW LET'S PRAY THAT....

LOOK, BOB... WHAT'S HE DOING...?

GOOD GRIEF! WHY, IT'S... IT'S... A HUGE GOLD NUGGET! HE'S GIVING IT TO US! IT'S...

THE "EYE OF THE BEAR"!!

BOB! THE BEAR!  
HE'S GOING TO...!

NO! NO, IT CAN'T BE!  
I STILL DON'T BELIEVE...

AHHHHHHHHH!

OHHHHHHHH!

MOMENTS LATER, TWO SOADDEN FIGURES REGAIN CONSCIOUSNESS AND CRAWL SLOWLY INTO THE TENT ----

BOB! WHERE ARE WE--WHAT--WHAT HAPPENED?! I--I MUST HAVE DREAMED--ABOUT A BEAR AND--BUT HOW DID WE GET OUT HERE, IN THE RAIN?

LET ME HELP YOU, ANNE. WE MUST GET INSIDE! I DREAMED, TOO.. FUNNY, IT WAS THE SAME DREAM AS YOURS...

BUT THAT'S ALL IT WAS--  
A DREAM! IT MUST HAVE BEEN! SUCH THINGS  
CAN'T HAP...

BOB, LOOK, DARLING,  
LOOK WHAT YOU'RE  
HOLDING... IN YOUR  
HAND!



